

Claims

1. A method of transmitting data over a network having initially undetermined transmission capacity, in which the data comprise a first part and at least two alternative
5 second parts corresponding to respective different resolutions, for presentation at a receiving terminal simultaneously with the first part, comprising:
 - (a) transmitting at least an initial portion of the first part;
 - (b) receiving data indicative of the available transmission capacity;
 - (c) choosing among the alternative second parts, as a function of the data
10 indicative of the available transmission capacity;
 - (d) transmitting the chosen second part and any remainder of the first part.
2. A method according to claim 1 including the step of generating said data indicative of the available transmission capacity by monitoring the transmission by the
15 network of the said initial portion of the first part.
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2 in which, in an initial time period of step (d), transmission of a leading part of the chosen second part of an extent corresponding to the extent of the first part already transmitted is performed preferentially to, or to the
20 exclusion of, further transmission of the first part.
4. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the first part is data representing an audio signal and the alternative second parts are alternative sets of video data, encoded at respective different compression rates, for presentation simultaneously
25 with the audio data.
5. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the first part is the base layer data of layered coded video and the second part(s) are one or more enhancement layers of the layered coded video.
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6. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the first part is text and the alternative second parts are alternative versions, having different resolutions, of a graphical image to be displayed alongside the text.

7. A method of transmitting data over a network having initially undetermined transmission capacity, in which the data comprise a first part and at least one second part, for presentation at a receiving terminal simultaneously with the first part, comprising:

- 5 (a) transmitting at least an initial portion of the first part;
- (b) receiving data indicative of the available transmission capacity;
- (c) choosing, as a function of the data indicative of the available transmission capacity, among the options of transmitting no second part, or one or more of the second parts;
- 10 (d) transmitting the chosen second part(s), if any, and the remainder of the first part.